

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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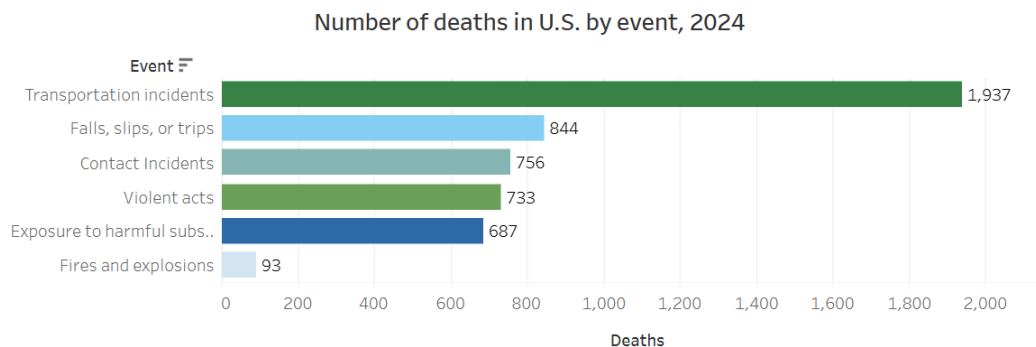
Public Employees Local 71 Statement Workers' Memorial Day 2026

ANCHORAGE, AK--- Local 71 Business Manager, William "Bill" Meers Recognizes Unions Role in Workplace Safety this Workers' Memorial Day.

April 28th is a worldwide recognition of lives lost and impaired through workplace injuries. The Bureau of Labor Statistics released the latest numbers for workplace injuries and deaths in Alaska on April 1st. *"While we have made progress these last few years, there is still so much to do,"* said Bill Meers, Business Manager of Public Employees Local 71. He says, *"When people ask if unions are still relevant in this day and age, I tell them that only unions are constantly fighting for workplace safety through our negotiations and grievances. Without our unions, we would still be at rock bottom."*

Alaska reduced fatal workplace injuries from 29 in 2023 to 24 in 2024¹ but still hovers at the second highest. While total injuries were reduced, our sparse population means that we are still ranked #2, right behind Alabama. Meers says this is unacceptable and reminds members to exercise their rights on the job. *"If you see something, say something,"* says Meers. *"You have the right to refuse work if you see unsafe conditions."* Meers encouraged all workers to talk frequently to their union representatives and attend their union meetings to better their working conditions.

[NSC Injury Facts](#) listed the top workplace injuries resulting in loss of life as:



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¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics most recent information is released yearly and represents information from previous years. This release is drafted with the most recently released information.

Local 71 is a statewide Local Union representing roughly 2,000 members in public sector employment.

We have offices in Fairbanks, and Juneau, and a Main Office in Anchorage.

Our members are hard workers and good neighbors who contribute greatly to their communities.

We proudly offer members-only benefits including training, job referrals, scholarships, health trust, discounts, and other support.

More information may be found at www.Local71.com or our Facebook page.